

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, TH

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE VISIT BY INDONESIAN OFFICIAL

REF: BANGKOK 26803

1. DEPARTMENT HAS LEARNED THAT GENERAL ARAFIN OF BULOG HAS BEEN GIVEN AN "OPEN" INVITATION BY THE WESTERN WHEAT ASSOCIATES, A PRIVATE TRADE ORGANIZATION, TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE WHEAT SALES TO INDONESIA. ALTHOUGH NOT AN OFFICIAL INVITATION, US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE MAY SHARE IN EXPENSES AS IT HAS ON SIMILAR OCCASIONS IN THE PAST FOR MARKET DEVELOPMENT.

2. IN THE EVENT THIS INVITATION IS AGAIN RAISED BY THE THAI, THE EMBASSY SHOULD EMPHASIZE THAT WE HAVE NO IN-

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FORMATION THAT GENERAL ARAFIN'S VISIT WOULD HAVE ANY

CONNECTION WHATSOEVER WITH POSSIBLE RICE SALES.

3. DEPARTMENT WISHES TO EXPRESS ITS APPRECIATION TO THE AMBASSADOR FOR SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON ALLEGED US PLANS FOR "DUMPING" RICE IN SINGAPORE AND HONG KONG. WE HAVE NOTED AN INCREASED TENDENCY BY THE THAI TO PASS ON OR CREDIT RUMORS OF NEFARIOUS US ACTIVITIES IN RICE TRADE, E.G. OUR ALLEGED INTERVENTION WITH EC TO DENY

THAILAND EUROPEAN MARKET; AND EMBASSY SHOULD CONTINUE TO ALERT THE DEPARTMENT ON FUTURE RUMORS OR THAI STATEMENTS SO THAT APPROPRIATE RESPONSE CAN BE QUICKLY MADE.

4. AMBASSADOR MAY ALSO ASSURE ANAN THAT WE REMAIN VERY MUCH AWARE OF HIS CONCERN ABOUT IMPLICATIONS OF PL 480 RICE SALES IN COUNTRIES WHICH THAILAND REGARDS AS ITS TRADITIONAL MARKETS. AS WITNESS, ANAN MIGHT RECALL HIS CONVERSATION EARLY THIS YEAR WITH DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY EDMOND CONCERNING POSSIBLE PL 480 RICE SALES TO INDONESIA. AS RESULT OF THIS APPROACH AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS, RICE WAS NOT INCLUDED IN OUR FY 1975 PL 480 PROGRAM TO INDONESIA AND IT IS NOT PRESENTLY PLANNED TO INCLUDE RICE IN OUR FY 1976 PL 480 PROGRAM TO THAT COUNTRY. NEVERTHELESS IT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED THAT IT IS ALWAYS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT THE FUTURE COMPOSITION OF OUR CONTINUALLY CHANGING PROGRAMS. HOWEVER, AMBASSADOR CAN AGAIN REASSURE ANAN THAT WHATEVER COMPOSITION AND LEVEL ARE FINALLY DECIDED ON, THAILAND'S LEGITIMATE CONCERNS WILL BE GIVEN FULL CONSIDERATION AND THAT WE WILL CONTINUE OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH THE THAI. ROBINSON

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